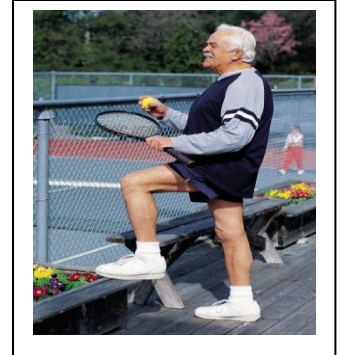
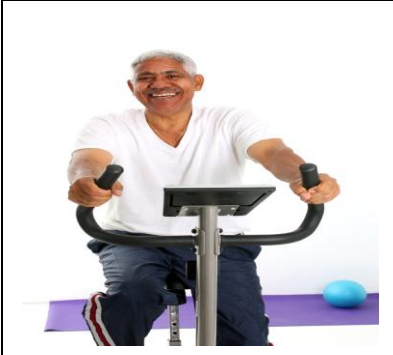




REPRESENTATIVE ROBERTO R. ALONZO'S capitol report



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Pairing Up With Buddy on Diet, Exercise Might be Recipe for Success *

With the holidays now upon us, celebrations galore almost daily, and eating in abundance everywhere we go, visit, or travel, many of us are thinking of a resolution for the New Year. And with that of course, comes one of the most common resolutions on the top of the list for many, young and old alike, including senior citizens.

Some people fall of their diet and exercise goals until they finally find that one single kernel that helps them achieve their targets - and for many, it's implementing the *"buddy system."* That's according to a Baylor of Medicine expert, Dr. Richard Pesikoff, clinical professor of psychiatry in the Menninger Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at BCM. Dr. Pesikoff says: *"It can be a very effective system to achieve a set goal, as seen in programs such as Weight Watchers and Alcoholic Anonymous."*

Find a Reliable Partner

Probably the most important factor in the buddy system is finding a reliable partner - someone who has an attachment both to you and to the goal you have set. *"Look at it like a business contract - any contract is only as good as the person you've entered into it with,"* says Dr. Pesikoff. That is, you should look for a partner with the same goal as you and who has the ability to meet short-, mid-, and long-term commitments. Additionally, you will need someone who does not want to let you down, and vice versa.

Extra Motivation

"You've set a certain goal because it's right thing to do, but sometimes you need that added foot in the back," continues Dr. Pesikoff. *"A friend can provide that, and there's extra motivation because you don't want to let your friend down."* Additionally, says Dr. Pesikoff, *"It doesn't feel good when you leave someone out in the cold, waiting for you to show up at the gym."* Buddy systems can extend to more than one person, according to the BCM expert. Running clubs are an excellent example of this. *"If everyone else in your group is doing it, you'll be more likely to do it too,"* says Dr. Pesikoff.

Goals can take a long time to achieve, usually because it takes a long time for cravings for such things like food to disappear. So be sure to find a buddy who will stick with you for an indefinite period and one that you can continue to turn to if cravings reappear.

[* This information was excerpted in part from *Senior News*, December 2012 edition, and Baylor College of Medicine]